

hope she will; but I fancy it will be a little too much for her."

For a whole week nothing was seen or heard of Jerry; but at the end of that time his wife appeared and put down five shillings on the counter.

"Will you please take that off the account, sir," she said, "and give me a receipt?"

This was done with a gracious smile, and Jerry's wife departed. Mr. Rewitt announced his having hit the right nail on the head. The wife of the cobbler was making an effort to clear off her husband's debt.

At the end of another week a second five shillings was paid, and then harvest came on—truly a harvest to the agricultural labourer, as at that time he gathers in clothes, and whatever necessities his harvest money will enable him to procure. All the little tradesmen in the village were busy, and even Jerry was reported to be full-handed. But he did not come near "The Oram Arms" for drink.

On the third week Jerry's wife brought ten shillings, and on the fourth fifteen, to the great joy and satisfaction of Mr. Rewitt, whose joy, however, was alloyed by the fear that he had lost a good customer. He resolved to look up Jerry as soon as another instalment of his account was paid.

Nothing was brought for a fortnight, and the landlord congratulated himself upon not having hastily sought out his absent customer, who still owed him over a pound; but the appearance of Jerry's wife with the balance had the effect of making him think otherwise. There was no display in putting down the money—it was quietly done—but the happy light in the woman's eyes as she took the receipt, spoke more than mere words or actions.

"I have been hasty with Jerry," said Mr. Rewitt, when another whole month had elapsed without Jerry appearing; "he promised to pay at harvest time, and he did it; but I have offended him, and 'The Green Goose' has caught his custom."

"Go and see him," suggested his wife.

"I intend to do so. Here, give me our Tom's boots; they want a patch on the side, and it will be an excuse for my dropping in upon him."

"That isn't too much of a job for him, seeing that you give George Stevens the best of the work," said Mrs. Rewitt.

"Stevens works better than Jerry," replied her husband; "you can always trust him to do his work when it is promised, but Jerry keeps the things for weeks together."

"That's true; but I've got a pair of boots that want new fronts, and I can wait a week or two. Take them."

"I'll take both," said Richard Rewitt; "nothing like baiting your hook well while you are about it."

Armed for the reconquest of Jerry, the landlord set forth in the morning—that being a slack time when he could be easily spared from home. Outside were a couple of loafers with no money and no credit, who touched their hats to him. Mr. Rewitt favoured them with a nod of lofty indifference.

Jerry's cottage was in the middle of the village, standing back about fifty feet from the road; and although its inside poverty had been well-known, the outside, thanks to his wife, looked quite as well as its neighbours'. Therefore Mr. Rewitt was not in the least surprised to see it look bright and gay on that beautiful autumn morning.

As he approached the door, he heard the sound of Jerry's hammer upon the lapstone, and, to his utter amazement, the voice of Jerry carolling a cheerful ditty, as unlike the cracked efforts he used occasionally to come out with in the taproom as the song of the thrush is to the hoarse note of the raven. Raising the latch, the landlord of "The Oram Arms" peeped in.

"Good-morning, Jerry," he said.

"Ah! is that you, Mr. Rewitt?" replied Jerry, looking up.

"Come in."

Jerry looked wondrous clean, and had even been shaved that very morning. His blue shirt looked clean, too, and he actually had a collar on. Mr. Rewitt was so overcome by the change that he stood still with the boots under his arm, forgetting that they formed part of his mission.

"You look very well, Jerry," he said at last.

"Never felt better in all my life," replied Jerry. "I wish, sir, I could say the same of you. You look whitish."

"I've—I've got a bit of a cold," replied the other, "and I've been shut up with business lately. Trade's been brisk; but how is it we have not seen you?"

"Well—the fact is, sir," said Jerry, thoughtfully, rubbing his chin, "I've been busy working off your score."

"But it is done, man," said Mr. Rewitt, cheerfully; "the door is quite clean as far as you are concerned."

"I am glad of that."

"Others have got their share," said the landlord, facetiously; "but I think we could make room for you, if you look us up."

"No, thank you, sir," returned Jerry. "I've had enough of chalking on other people's doors, and now I chalks on my own."

"Chalks on your own!"

"Yes, sir; have the goodness to turn round and look behind you. There's my door half full."

"It's a wise thing to keep account yourself," said the landlord, who hardly knew what to make of it; "for mistakes will happen; but—"

"No mistake can happen, sir," interrupted Jerry, "for I am the only party that keeps that account."

"But who trusts you to do that?"

"Nobody—I trust myself," replied Jerry. "The marks that were on your door shewed what I did drink, and them marks on mine shew what I don't drink."

A little light had got into the landlord's brain, and he had a pretty good idea of what was coming, but he said nothing.

"That night when you spoke to me about the chalks on the door being a standing disgrace to me, was the night of my waking," continued Jerry. "No man could have lectured me better than you did, and I thank you for it from the bottom of my heart. As I left your house I vowed to touch drink no more, and I came home and told my wife so, and we both joined in earnest prayer that I might have strength to keep my vow. The next morning I went over to George Stevens and asked him how I could go about signing the pledge. He helped me like a man—and it was done."

With his eyes wandering to and fro between Jerry and the chalks upon the door, the amazed landlord still remained silent. Jerry went on:

"My wife wanted to work herself to death to keep me," he said; "but I said 'No. You do what you can to keep the children until my debts are paid, and then I'll keep you and the children too.' So I went to work, paying right and left; and when all was paid off, I began to do what I ought to have done years ago—fed my wife and children. I had enough and to spare, and I would have spent some with you. And many's the time I've been tempted to come—and I'm tempted still; but when the feeling comes over me I has a drink of water or a cup of tea, puts two-pence into a box I've got on purpose, and scoops a chalk on the door. All of them chalks are so many temptations and so many twopences saved."

Mr. Rewitt was still unable to make any particular remark; but he murmured in a confused manner; "You've got a lot of 'em."

"Yes; there's a large family," replied Jerry, complacently, "and the more I looks at 'em the better I likes 'em. There's not much standing disgrace about that lot; credit if anything."

"Oh! yes—yes," returned the landlord; "but—dear me—this cold in my head is quite distressing. You must have a large box for all your twopences."

"When I get six together I takes them off to the post-office," replied Jerry; "there's a bank there better than any till. Tills give nothing out, but banks like that returns you more than you put in. Until I began to keep my own chalks I had no idea how much you till swallowed up. You would not trust me for a pint; but I can have my money out of the bank whenever I want it."

"That's something," said Mr. Rewitt, tartly.

"It is everything to a man who has a wife and children to keep," replied Jerry. "The best of us have sickness and trouble and rainy days, and then it's a great thing to have something to fall back upon. It is better to be able to keep yourself than to go to the parish. There's another thing, too, about these chalks of mine—yours went down before my wife and children were fed; mine go down after that's done; and I think my chalks are the better of the two. So I says to all, 'Chalk your own door.'"

Mr. Rewitt had nothing to say; he could not deny and he would not admit it, but took refuge like other beaten men—in flight. With the boots under his arm he hastened home and presented himself before his wife in a rather excited condition.

"What is the matter, Richard?" she asked.

"Nothing particular," he replied, "except that Jerry Muddler has joined the temperance lot, and he seems so firm in it that I don't believe he will ever touch a drop again."

Mr. Richard Rewitt of "The Oram Arms" was right. And Jerry, who bears the name of Muddler no longer, but is called by that to which he is entitled by right of birth, viz., that of Marden, has not touched a drop of strong drink from the day of his reformation to this. His door has been filled again and again with the score which he records in his own favour; and the beer he has not drunk is everywhere around him in the form of a comfortable home, a respectable amount in the savings-bank, and a goodly investment in a building society. *Verbum sat sapienti*, which being freely interpreted means, "A word to you my reader, is sufficient"—"Chalk your own door."—*The British Workman*.

HUFFY PEOPLE.

One of the oddest things to witness, if not one of the most disagreeable to encounter, is the faculty which some people have for taking offence where no offence is meant—taking "huff," as the phrase goes, with reason or without—making themselves and every one else uncomfortable, for nothing deeper than a mood or more than a fancy. Huffy people are to be met with, of all ages and in every station, neither years nor condition bringing necessarily wisdom and unsuspectingness; but we are bound to say that the larger proportion will be generally found among women, and chiefly among those who are of an uncertain social position, or who are unhappy in their circumstances, not to speak of their tempers. Huffiness, which seems to be self-assertion in what may be called the negative form, and which the possessors thereof classify as a high spirit of sensitiveness, according as they are passionate or sullen, is, in reality the product of self-distrust. The person who has self-respect, and nothing to fear, who is of an assured social status, and happy private condition, is never apt to take offence. Many and great are the dangers of action with huffy people, and sure as you are to flounder into the bog with them, while you are innocently thinking you are walking on the solidest esplanade, the dangers of speech are just as manifold. The dangers of jesting are, above all, great. It may be laid down as an absolute rule, which has no exception anywhere, that no huffy person can bear a joke good-humouredly, or take it as it is meant. If you attempt the very simplest form of chaffing, you will soon be made to find out your mistake, and not infrequently

the whole harmony of an evening has been set wrong, because a thin-skinned, huffy person has taken a pleasant jest as a personal affront, and either blazed out or gloomed sullenly, according to his or her individual disposition, and the direction of the wind at the time.—*Household*.

A MOTHER'S CARE.

I do not think that I could bear
My daily weight of woman's care,
If it were not for this:

That Jesus seemeth always near,
Unseen, but whispering in my ear
Some tender word of love and cheer,
To fill my soul with bliss!

There are so many trivial cares
That no one knows and no one shares,
Too small for me to tell—
Things, e'en my husband cannot see,
Nor his dear love uplift from me,
Each hour's unnamed perplexity
That mothers know so well:

The failure of some household scheme,
The ending of some pleasant dream,
Deep hidden in my breast;
The weariness of children's noise,
The yearning for that subtle poise
That turneth duty into joys,
And giveth inner rest.

These secret things, however small,
Are known to Jesus, each and all,
And this thought brings me peace.
I do not need to say one word,
He knows what thought my heart hath stirred,
And by divine caress my Lord
Makes all its throbbings cease.

And then upon His loving breast,
My weary head is laid at rest,
In speechless ecstasy!
Until it seemeth all in vain
That care, fatigue, or mortal pain
Should hope to drive me forth again
From such felicity!

WOMAN'S BOTTOM GRIEVANCE.

This is mine to start with—that when God puts two creatures into the world (I hope that people of advanced intelligence will forgive the old-fashioned phraseology, which perhaps is behind the age,) it was not that one should be the servant to the other, but because there was for each a certain evident and sufficient work to do. It is needless to inquire which work was the highest. Judgment has been universally given in favour of the man's work, which is that of the protector and food-producer—though even here one cannot but feel that there is something to be said on the weaker side, and that it is possible that the rearing of children might seem in the eyes of the Maker, who is supposed to feel a special interest in the human race, as noble an occupation, in its way, as the other. To keep the world rolling on, as it has been doing for all these centuries, there have been needful two creatures, two types of creatures, the one an impossibility without the other. And it is a curious thought, when we come to consider it, that the man, who is such a fine fellow and thinks so much of himself, would after all be a complete nonentity without the woman whom he has hustled about and driven into a corner ever since she began to be. Now, it seems to me that the first, the largest, and the most fundamental of all the grievances of woman, is this: that they never have, since the world began, got the credit of that share of the work of the world which has fallen naturally to them, and which they have, on the whole, faithfully performed through all vicissitudes. It will be seen that I am not referring to the professions, which are the trades of men, according to universal acknowledgement, but to that common and general women's work, which is, without any grudging, acknowledged to be their sphere.

And I think it is one of the most astonishing things in the world to see how entirely all the honour and credit of this, all the importance of it, all its real value, is taken from the doers of it. That her children "may rise up and call her blessed" is allowed by Holy Writ, and there are vague and general permissions of praise given to those who take the woman's part in the conflict. It is allowed to be said that she is a ministering angel, a consoler, an encouragement to the exertions of the man, and a rewarder of his toil. She is given within due limitations a good deal of praise; but very rarely any justice. I scarcely remember any writer who has ever ventured to say that the half of the work of the world is actually accomplished by women; and very few husbands who would be otherwise than greatly startled and amazed, if not indignant, if not derisive, at the suggestion of such an idea as that the work of their wives was equal to their own. And yet for my part I think it is.—*Mrs. Oliphant*.

"ALL good things of this world are no further good to us than as they are of use; and whatever we may heap up to give to others we enjoy only so much as we can use and no more. The German proverb of the key—"If I rest I rust"—is applicable to the labour of the hand and the mind and to the misuse or abuse of the gifts of God to us, Indolence is impotence. Rest is rust."